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TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, KPAO, GM
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CIA IRAN MIDEAST FRANCE ETHIOPIA
AZERBAIJAN;BERLIN

- A. Lead Stories Summary
- B. (U.S.) Reports On Secret CIA Prisons
- C. (Iran) Power Struggle
- D. (Mideast) Peace Process, Tenth Anniversary Of Rabin's Death
- E. (France) Youth Riots
- F. (Africa) Ethiopian Unrest
- G. (Azerbaijan) U.S. Role In Upcoming Elections

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A. Lead Stories Summary

HEADLINES

No Increase in Pensions - Cuts In Spending On Drugs
(Frankfurter Allgemeine)

Shortages Of 70 Billion Euros In Budget (Sueddeutsche
Zeitung)

Grand Coalition Will Freeze Pensions Until 2010 (Die Welt)

Merkel Considers Austerity Course To Be Question Of Fate
(Frankfurter Rundschau)

1.8 Billion Cut For Hartz IV Recipients (Tagesspiegel)

Pensioners Outraged At Coalition (Berliner Zeitung)

Editorials focused on the outcome of the PISA study (Program
For International Student Assessment) and the new leadership
of the SPD. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute and ARD-
TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with stories
on coalition talks.

B. (U.S.) Reports On Secret CIA Prisons

1. "Interrogations On Foreign Territory"

Dietrich Alexander commented in right-of-center Die Welt of
Berlin (11/4):

"Silence in the White House - no comment, no outrage,
no harsh protests. Such behavior suggests that the
Washington Post story, which said the CIA operates a system
of secret prisons in eight countries, could be true. The
matter is about to become embarrassing for the Bush
administration. The government apparently has problems
coming up with the right statement to explain something that
cannot be justified.. President Bush must very soon explain
himself if he wants to prevent allegations and suspicions
from getting out of control. This would irreparably damage
his reputation. The frontrunner in the war on terror must
credibly explain that he has not betrayed the moral values
he wanted to preserve. Free nations must continue to
believe in human rights, including civilized treatment of
detainees, respecting their legal rights, and giving them
access to the International Red Cross. Otherwise, the free
world would be using the methods of those it is prosecuting

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and fighting with justification. For the time being, the European Convention on Human Rights is valid in Europe. There is no place for black sites. Everybody should respect this."

2. "Spine"

Jrg Reckmann noted in left-of-center Frankfurter Rundschau (11/4):

"The Europeans have experienced murder, torture, violence and other violations of fundamental human rights in

the 20th century. The absolute respect for human rights is therefore an untouchable foundation in old Europe, as U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld described the continent. The current U.S. administration takes this lightly, allowing the torture of detainees, detaining people without granting them legal rights and arguing against the torture ban. With this policy, the U.S. could not become a member of the European Union. Against this background, the allegation that the CIA holds terror suspects in special prisons in the EU country of Poland and the applicant country of Romania is becoming an explosive issue.. We have the moral obligation to remind Washington that Europe is not willing to ignore human rights, also not even in regards to the enemies of freedom. That is a task for European leaders, including the new German chancellor. If the new allegations are true, a spine is required."

3. Regional Landeszeitung of Lneburg (11/4) editorialized:

"If the allegations, which the White House did not reject, are true, more than a lukewarm diplomatic protest must follow. Otherwise, the European home of democracy is at risk of being forced into the moral ruin, where the most powerful democracy is at the moment. The war on terror cannot just be fought with candles, but if democracies betray their values, they mutate into a distorted picture. Europe is required to stop the violation of its ideals on its own soil."

C. (Iran) Power Struggle

1. "Power Struggle"

Karl Grobe observed in left-of-center Frankfurter Rundschau (11/4):

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"The recent events indicate a power struggle. It is not a power struggle between the ultras and reformers, but a fight among the ultras. Ahmadinejad, who was elected because of his populist agenda, is not in the position to deliver and meet his social promises. He cannot keep his emotional voters happy. Of course, he cannot be voted out of office, but he must deliver to remain powerful. He now tries to become more popular by his foreign political propaganda. The consequences for his regime and country will be dangerous. Khamenei is therefore trying to put a stop to it. It could be too late."

D. (Mideast) Peace Process, Tenth Anniversary Of Rabin's Death

1. "Rabin's Legacy"

Thorsten Schmitz commented in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (11/4):

"Ten years after Rabin's death, the peace process has stopped. Only three months ago, the Gaza disengagement was celebrated. It now looks like there never was one. What the world praised as a move towards peace turned out to be a mirage. Israel unilaterally drafts a map for the future and builds settlements within the fence - and the Palestinians are stuck in the medieval fight over blood and soil instead of focusing on establishing a state and drafting a constitution."

E. (France) Youth Riots

1. "An Area Where The Law Does Not Exist"

Jochen Hehn had this to say in an editorial in right-of-center Die Welt of Berlin (11/4):

"We cannot be surprised by the pictures from Paris suburbs of blind destruction and escalating violence which have been flickering on TV screens for more than a week now.. These suburbs have been in existence for many years and have spread like a cancer across France and continue to grow.. Many are dilapidated and have turned into permanently explosive areas where the law is no longer valid. The helpless reactions from politicians from the right and the left emphasize this.. The problems have been known for a long time. The chronic failure of schools is

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the greatest problem and is no coincidence.. But there is not only a lack of schools and teachers, but also of doctors and shops, attractive leisure time facilities, and safe bus and train connections. Without enormous infrastructure investments in these problematic suburbs, an improvement cannot be brought about. Well-meant proposals like the introduction of the right to vote for immigrants do not go to the core of the problem.

"By politically exploiting the unrest in the suburbs for personal careers, as some people are again trying, politicians of the established parties like the many millions who live in these suburbs will only lose. The only one who will benefit will be the extremist right-wing National Front of Jean-Marie le Pen for whom burning suburbs are grist to the mill. If government and opposition again miss the opportunity to alleviate the problems in the suburbs, we can already adjust to a new triumph by Le Pen in the presidential elections in 18 months."

2. "Writing On the Wall In France"

Business daily Financial Times Deutschland of Hamburg (11/4) had this to say:

"Poor suburbs in which immigrants and ethnic minorities live in a small area without having any prospect of climbing the social ladder have existed in almost all western European countries and in the United States. The irritating thing about the eruption of violence in France is that some preconditions for integration, which are still controversial in other countries, including Germany have been met. Many young people speak the national language, have French nationality and come from regions in Northern Africa where France has put its cultural mark, and the French state had always initiated social programs for the problematic suburbs and disadvantaged groups.. But the results are not much better than the ones in the United States with its allegedly laissez-fair approach.. That is why an interior minister, who comes on strong with an even greater police force, is coming too late in view of the state of the downward spiral. It is now decisive to open up new opportunities for the young in particular to enter society with new education offers, but also with a labor market policy that offers the weaker parts lasting chances to find a job. In this respect, the French model obviously failed."

3. "Violence Is Escalating In The suburbs, And The Citoyen In The better Suburbs Get Scared"

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Gerd Krncke penned the following editorial in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (11/3):

"The France we see in the ghettos of the suburbs has little in common with the situation in the rest of the country, and thus far no government has successfully reconciled both parts. What is missing is a binding consensus. In the suburbs, people do not sing the Marseillaise and when it is played in the soccer stadiums, many people will whistle it down. But even if Interior Minister Sarkozy is right in several respects, with his remarks to 'clean up' the suburbs or to describe the young as 'scum,' he only pours oil into the fire. Cars are set afire night after night. The socialist mayors of the problematic areas are desperate. But even the left-wing predecessor government did not succeed in bringing peace to the suburbs. Attempts to integrate the immigrants of the third generation have failed."

4. Center-right Neue Westfölische of Bielefeld (11/04) noted:

"France has a problem; what about Germany? Ghettoization continues in Germany, too. Partly on a voluntary basis, partly deliberately supported. This clash of cultures still goes unnoticed. Young Muslims in particular have difficulties in the role in which they were raised. An increasing number of them does not attend school because they do not want to recognize that education and not gender is the key in society. Sniveling or an excessive display of machoism is their answer. Nevertheless, Germany is still far away from the French situation. Evidence is that female migrants in particular are taking advantage of their chance to emancipate at schools and in their professions. But the French example is alarming: among the old and young ones, among boys and girls only hatred grows in a ghetto."

5. Right-of-center Nrnberger Zeitung (11/04) argued:

"A hectic search for a solution to the problems has now begun in Paris. Interior Minister Sarkozy, who had hoped to get applause from the middle class with his disparaging remark of 'scum,' has caused an outrage. In addition to a strong presence of police, Prime Minister de Villepin is now pinning his hopes on the persuasive force of a reform plan, which is to improve the life of young people. But this is something that should have happened long ago."

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6. Right-of-center Mnchener Merkur (11/04) judged:

"This chaos is not new. We have seen burning cars and barricades in the French suburbs since the 80s. But, nevertheless, this time, many things are different. Escalating violence is shocking beyond France's borders. France is faced with a real test.. But the government will prevail again, if necessary by using brute force. But the social wounds that will then be inflicted will become deeper, and the real problem unresolved: mass unemployment among young people and ghetthoization. The result will be suburbs to which emergency doctors will go only if police protects them, suburbs in which the state has probably lost its place long ago."

F. (Africa) Ethiopian Unrest

1. "Riots In Addis"

Michael Bitalla had this to say in an editorial in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (11/4):

"At first sight, the riots in Addis Ababa may be appear as a domestic affair, for the violent clashes are with a regime which is accused of electoral fraud and which wants to defend its power by using all its force. But in a worst-case scenario, the street clashes could even cause a new war with neighboring Eritrea. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has now warned against such a danger.. If the dictatorial regime in Eritrea has contributed just as much to the escalation of the situation along the border, the domestic problems in Ethiopia could lead to an escalation between the two countries. Meles Zenawi's hated government was able to enjoy the full support of the people only during the war with Eritrea between 1998 and 2000. Since the opposition is now accusing him of being too yielding in the peace talks, and is calling for the conquest of the former Ethiopian harbor town of Asab, Zenawi could be tempted to safeguard his power through a new war."

G. (Azerbaijan) U.S. Role In Upcoming Elections

1. "Chaos And Chance"

Matthias Brggmann concluded in an editorial in business daily Handelsblatt of Duesseldorf (11/4):

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"[Observers] are expecting massive vote-rigging during the upcoming elections in Azerbaijan. And experience teaches us that this will lead to bloody unrest. But the chaos also offers a chance. Even if the controversial President Aliyev survives such an outrage, he is likely to change his previous policy. For it is mainly the United States as a close partner of the oil-rich country, that has been vehemently pushing for a democratization of Azerbaijan. In the past, Washington closed its eyes when Aliyev brutally beat up the opposition and rigged votes. The State Department has now called upon the government in Baku to stick to clear democratic rules of the game..

"For a long time, Washington has propagated its intention to urge the Muslim oil countries to pursue a democratization course. If this enterprise is to gain credibility, then it must begin with it in countries like Azerbaijan or Kazakhstan, where President Nasarbajey is seeking another term in December.. And if this change makes progress, then these newcomers on the international energy markets can be a positive example for other countries.. It is in the very own U.S. interest to continue a positive development, for the region around the Caspian Sea is an oil-producing area whose significance can be compared with the sources in the North Sea or in the United States. And finally, if these states really adopted a framework for the rule of law, the United States would no longer have to accept the 'blood-for-oil' accusation. The new slogan would then be 'democracy for oil.'."

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